

The Fundamental Facts of Spiritualism

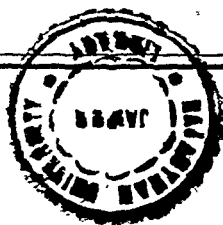
By

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Author of

*"The Facts of Psychic Science
and Philosophy"*

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The Facts of Psychic Science and Philosophy

**Collated and Discussed by
A. CAMPBELL HOLMS.**

Author of "PRACTICAL SHIPBUILDING."

Royal 8vo.

This book brings together, explains and correlates practically all the well-known phenomena of Spiritualism and Psychic Science, objective and subjective. In its 512 closely-printed pages the reader will find, set out methodically, all he may wish to learn of the research work and conclusions of the world's students, and of what is possible in this entrancing subject. It is written in simple, matter-of-fact language, and contains elaborate indices and ample references.

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PREFACE.

The purpose of this little book is to enable those approaching the subject of Spiritualism for the first time, to acquire easily and at small expense a general knowledge of the facts on which it is founded. These facts proclaim truths which are of the utmost importance to the welfare of mankind. Truth should prevail at all costs, wherever it may lead. Those concerning the spiritual nature of man should be proclaimed far and wide, for only through their realization can the present-day materialism and many unhappy religious dogmas be swept aside.

Readers who desire evidence as to the facts, and fuller information than this little book offers, are recommended to consult the author's comprehensive work "The Facts of Psychic Science and Philosophy: Collated and Discussed."

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THE FUNDAMENTAL FACTS

of

SPIRITUALISM

The majority of people are never brought face to face with anything suggesting the miraculous or "supernatural," and, consequently, they go through life in the belief that nothing ever happens that cannot be accounted for in a perfectly natural way. This, no doubt, is the reason why most people are inclined to dismiss as fables all accounts of psychic phenomena. Such phenomena happen, nevertheless, and are familiar occurrences to Spiritualists and students of Psychic Science.

As these investigators make no secret of their experiences it is odd that so few of the general public seem to know of them. There are several reasons for this ; one is the fact that no one finds it worth while to relate his wonderful experiences to strangers, when he feels pretty sure that he will not be believed, but be looked upon pityingly as mentally unbalanced. Few newspapers care to publish serious accounts of psychic phenomena for fear of shocking the prejudices or religious susceptibilities of their readers; if, there-

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fore, they do publish them, it is usually with contemptuous derision. If fraud is imputed, as it usually is, the account is sure of ready acceptance, because the public likes a natural explanation of the dreaded supernatural. The police prosecutions of fortune-tellers—who may be perfectly genuine clairvoyants—is always good “copy” for the newspapers. Many books have been published dealing with every branch of Spiritualism and Psychic Science, but as the general public has no curiosity to examine a subject which it has been taught to associate with credulity and fraud, such books are not in demand and so are seldom seen in the bookshops.

In the study of all subjects it is the universally accepted rule to begin by reading authoritative books, so as to ascertain what others before us have already seen and done and what conclusions they have come to as a result of their researches. Unfortunately, in the case of Psychic Science, this common-sense rule is quite commonly set aside even by those who do not deny its wisdom; and it is doubtless because of this that so much ignorance still prevails among educated people as to the reality and significance of the fundamental facts of Spiritualism.

It is proposed in this book to describe briefly the essential facts, the reality of which is well established. The reality of an alleged phenomenon is believable if a sufficiency of credible evidence is produced in its favour. The blind man believes in the moon because the evidence he receives from others is overwhelming, and we also believe, on similar evidence, a vast number of facts which we cannot personally verify. In the case of supernormal phenomena most people prefer the evidence of their own senses, and this they can have if they themselves witness them.

Psychic phenomena can be verified personally by anyone, but as they are not on public show they must be sought, and the seeking may involve the expenditure of time, money and patience. Private circles do not care to admit strangers, because they are likely to disturb the mental atmosphere and prejudice the phenomena. If the necessary conditions are provided, phenomena can be observed in one's own home, but the preparatory work may occupy a long period. Some of the best mediums have only succeeded in developing their particular gifts after years of patient endeavour. Good reliable mediums are rare. Some are willing that the public should profit by their

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gift, usually, of course, at a price, but many in private life are unknown. Many keen psychic students have spent large sums of money and travelled thousands of miles to prove the reality of a particular phenomenon occurring through a specially gifted medium resident in some far-off place.

The majority of people, when their interest is first aroused in the phenomena of Spiritualism, immediately rush off to the first available medium, but as they do not know what to expect or the significance of what occurs, they learn little or nothing and are often puzzled and disappointed. If anything apparently supernatural happens, while the credulous at once conclude that a miracle has occurred, the sceptic jumps precipitately to the conclusion that clever trickery is a sufficient explanation. Sometimes the latter are right, for unhappily there have always been fraudulent mediums, who easily deceive those without expert knowledge. But deception is no more rife among the professional exponents of Spiritualism than among those in other professions. The dishonest practitioner is to be found in every community, without exception.

Haphazard attendances at public seances with

professional mediums and promiscuous sitters should be avoided, for, apart from the possibility of deception on the part of the medium, unknown psychic influences may be present which may debase the phenomena and result in wrong conclusions. Those who desire reliable personal experience should, after some preliminary study, form a small home circle composed of congenial friends of the right sort who are known to be level-headed, trustworthy and kindly in their thoughts. If the sittings are continued regularly over a sufficiently long period, the mediumship of one or more of the sitters will be developed and the patience of the circle finally rewarded by the occurrence of phenomena, both mental and objective, which will increase in strength and importance. Rules for the conduct of such circles are given in the Appendix.

In the following pages a brief description is given of the major mediumistic phenomena. Some of these in the objective class are so exceedingly marvellous that many find difficulty in accepting their reality without personal experience. Unfortunately the higher phenomena of Spiritualism, although frequently seen in the past, are now very uncommon, so much so that they are usually

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difficult to witness, except by the earnest student who is prepared to sacrifice both time and money.

The phenomena of Spiritualism are usually placed in two categories: the mental or subjective, and the physical or objective. Mental phenomena pertain to the mind; they include clairvoyance, prevision, psychometry, telepathy, etc. Physical phenomena are perceived by the senses, material or objective effects are produced: untouched objects are seen to move, luminous effects are seen in the dark, rapping noises, voices or music are heard, writing occurs on inaccessible papers, photographic plates are affected supernormally, materialized hands and faces are seen in semi-darkness, wounds or diseased tissues are suddenly healed, &c.

The majority of mediums produce only mental phenomena, some produce both kinds. Probably everyone has mediumistic faculties in a more or less latent state; in perhaps twenty per cent they are sufficiently active to be developed. The psychic faculties of most mediums are limited to certain types or groups of phenomena, and they may be quite unable to produce others.

The experiments of the early Spiritualists, from 1848 onwards, carried little weight with the scien-

tific world. With a few notable exceptions, the scientists scoffed and refused to examine either the evidence or the alleged phenomena. The twentieth century, however, has seen an increasing number of European scientists who have devoted themselves to experimental work and written classic books describing it. As a result of their studies some of the best informed now admit the reality of practically all the varied mediumistic phenomena which, for nearly eighty years, Spiritualists have been urging the world to accept as true. It would seem, therefore, that the day of triumph of these worthy pioneers is not far off.

Psychic research has established a great variety of extraordinary facts. The most momentous is that man is really a spirit, clothed temporarily in a material body. The spirit, which is, in fact, his ego, mind or personality, has a permanent etheric body or vehicle, interpenetrating the material body, of which it is a replica, and which it abandons at death. In its free state it is not entirely cut off from the material world, but in certain conditions can communicate with those still in earth life.

In accordance with the accepted electronic

theory of the constitution of matter, the human body, like all other material objects, consists far more of empty spaces than of the electrons or molecules of which it is composed, so that there is ample room within it for an etheric body of even greater "solidity." And the same thing may be said of the entire material universe. For if it be admitted that the rapidly vibrating exceedingly minute molecules or electrons which constitute matter only occupy about one-billionth of the space contained within its boundaries, there must be ample space within our apparently solid world for other worlds no less complex, which, because of their particular atomic or vibratory constitution, are entirely beyond our limited sense perceptions.

While enveloped by the material body a man's ego or spirit is unable freely to exercise its innate subliminal faculties, for in most of us our perceptions of outward things are limited to those communicated by our bodily sense organs. We cannot see, for instance, without eyes, nor feel without contact. Some few people, however can use more or less imperfectly their subliminal faculties, for with bandaged eyes they can see objects near at hand or hundreds of miles away ;

they can obtain detailed knowledge of events happening at that moment in a far-off place, or discern accurately past and future events. While the spirit is in close association with the material body these transcendental or spiritual perceptions are supernormal and imperfect, but, ultimately, when freed from the body, they are normal and perfect. Only those known as "sensitives" or "mediums" can exercise these supernormal faculties.

Hypnotism and the Subconscious Mind

A great deal of what we know about the spirit or mind and its supernormal faculties we have learned through hypnotism, which, in its elucidation of supernormal mental phenomena, has been a veritable master-key. Although nearly every one is more or less familiar with the phenomenon of hypnotism, and many are able without practice to produce the condition in others, what actually happens when the hypnotic state is induced is a mystery. Hypnosis resembles ordinary sleep, but instead of the waking, conscious mind retiring and giving place to a topsy-turvy dream mind it does so in favour of what seems to be an alert intelligent, sort of twin-brother of the conscious mind.

This secondary mind or personality which thus emerges in hypnotism is generally described as the subconscious or subliminal mind, because normally it is submerged and not apparent. It seems to be closely identified with the spirit, for in many subjects its perceptions are independent of the bodily sense organs. Thus some hypnotic subjects can taste or smell what another at a distance tastes or smells, read correctly his unuttered thoughts, or feel pain when the hypnotist is hurt. Some can also perceive clairvoyantly scenes at a distance, and read closed books, etc.

The fact that, in its activities, the subconscious mind or spirit is independent of space and of the bodily sense organs—as when it perceives things happening hundreds of miles away—indicates pretty clearly that its existence is not dependent on that of the material body, the dissolution of which, therefore, being something external to it, cannot injuriously affect it. Evidential messages from those who have passed over assert that the freeing of the spirit from the bonds of the flesh is in every way advantageous, for its perceptions are then keener and life in every way more worthwhile. In the case of the aged and those to whom misfortune or bodily infirmities makes life a bur-

Then, the loss of the body must evidently be one of the greatest boons.

The fact that our mental organism is in duplicate is not apparent to everyone, yet in each of us there is a distinct conscious mind (our familiar self or personality) and a subconscious mind (our unfamiliar spirit self). That this is true may be demonstrated in various ways, and particularly by hypnotism. Many of us can awake at a certain unusual time if we decide to do so before falling asleep. What is it that rouses our slumbering mind into activity? It is our hidden subconscious mind, which although usually in the background is, nevertheless, always alert and ready to do its part. In the case of a sleep-walker the subconscious mind is in complete control, the conscious mind being in the background, submerged in deep slumber. The sleep-walker does not use his ordinary sense organs, for although it may be pitch dark and his eyes may be closed, yet he moves about safely without collision or stumble, and has, on occasion, even been known to sit down and write an essay on a difficult subject of which he knows nothing when awake. He is clairvoyant, i. e., his subconscious mind, or spirit, which con-

tiols his movements percceives independently of the bodily sense organs.

One of the most remarkable facts revealed by hypnotism is that nothing that we have ever experienced, however trifling, is forgotten; though perhaps inaccessible to our conscious mind, it is recorded indelibly in the subconscious. If we tell a suitable subject in hypnosis that he is again, say, five years of age, he will remember contemporaneous incidents long forgotten by his conscious memory. If lines of poetry are read to a hypnotised subject he will remember nothing when awake, but when again hypnotised, perhaps long afterwards, he will remember them perfectly, for they have been permanently recorded in his subconscious mind, which again comes to the front during hypnosis.

When we pass over, we take all our memories with us, and as they are open for others to see, they may greatly influence our state of happiness. If we have memories of cruelty, injustice or selfishness we are filled with regret, for it is then too late to make amends, and our condition and progress are prejudiced.

The most noteworthy characteristic of the

subconscious mind is its readiness to accept and act upon suggestion. If a suitable subject is told in hypnosis that it is bitterly cold, he will shiver and button up his coat; if told that it is oppressively hot he will feel hot and perspire. If told that there is a bird in the room which he must replace in its cage, he will chase it and put it in the imaginary cage. If the hypnotist gives him a pencil and paper and desires mentally that he shall write something, say the words of the National Anthem, he will do so. If he tells him he will write them an hour after awakening he will do so; the writing will be done apparently automatically, for a minute or two later he will have no conscious memory of having written them. It should be observed that not all subjects are equally amenable to suggestion, and not all exhibit the supernormal faculties outlined in the foregoing.

The subconscious mind has very far-reaching powers of control over the bodily organism. If a suitable subject is told, in hypnosis, that his heart will beat faster or slower it will do so forthwith. Even the bodily temperature may be raised or lowered by suggestion. Dr. Burot, for instance, told a patient that his hand

would become cold, and its temperature there-upon fell ten degrees. The subconscious mind is capable of producing subtle changes in the tissues; thus when a hypnotised subject is told that the cold iron with which he is touched is red-hot and will burn him, a blister will form in accordance with the suggestion. And similarly when a patient is told in hypnosis that his ailment, whatever it be, is getting better and will soon be well, his return to health will in most cases be greatly expedited. If, when operated upon surgically during hypnosis, a patient is told that he will feel no pain at any time and that the wound will heal quickly, he will, in fact, feel no pain and the healing process will be hastened in accordance with the suggestion.

The subconscious mind is also accessible to suggestion in the normal state, but in most people the suggestion, to be effective, must be made repeatedly. The fact that diseases may be cured by repeatedly telling the patient, or by the patient repeatedly telling himself, that he is getting better and will soon be well, has long been recognised, and the late M. Coué did good service in popularising it.

The subconscious mind of a medium is much more accessible to suggestion than that of ordinary people. In the normal state it may be influenced telepathically by the thoughts and feelings of others, and, in the trance state, which is equivalent to self-induced hypnotism, it may be still more readily influenced by external minds. Just as a hypnotised subject will accept a mental suggestion or impression from his hypnotiser to do, say, or write something, so will an entranced medium accept similar suggestions from any external spirit which happens to get into rapport.

It is by impressing telepathically the subconscious mind of a medium that spirits are able to communicate with friends in earth life. And the ability to do so is not confined to the spirits of those passed over, for those still in earth life can communicate in the same way. A medium while in the normal state may be impressed to give a message either by speech or automatic writing. Or he may be entranced, so that his conscious mind disappears (more or less completely), in which case an external spirit may control all his thoughts and may cause him to speak, write, or do whatever it desires.

There are thus two classes of mediums for spirit communications: those who remain in the normal state, and those who are entranced. The first are usually clairvoyant; they see and describe the spirits who wish to communicate, and they may hear them speak clairaudiently; or they may be impressed telepathically with the thoughts the spirits wish to convey, or their hand may be controlled to write them automatically. A good clairvoyant medium will describe not only a spirit's appearance as it was in earth life, but his character and the circumstances of his death. Some are able to give the name of the spirit friend, but usually there is a difficulty with names, for a name is not a thought that can be easily impressed telepathically.

Automatic Writing

Automatic writing is one of the principal means of spirit communication. The automatic writer is usually in the normal state, but as his hand is controlled by his subconscious mind, he himself is not conscious of any mental or muscular effort. His subconscious mind may act independently, on its own, but usually

it is controlled or influenced more or less thoroughly by impressions from external spirit minds acting upon it telepathically. A well-developed automatic writer will write correctly whatever an external spirit may desire (though, owing to inherent difficulties in control, there is always a risk of sophistication). With imperfect mediumship there may be influences from the medium's own mind and from interfering spirits who may get *en rapport* simultaneously and thus confuse the writing. A good automatic writer can write just as well with his eyes closed; he need pay no attention to the writing, and may even read a book while it is in progress.

The automatic writer may use a pencil in the ordinary way; sometimes, however a *planchette* is used, but with little advantage. Some mediums find that they can better express their subconscious impression by the *ouija board*. This is merely a small travelling pointer, usually a converted *planchette*, which moves from letter to letter of the alphabet, set out on a board or on a strip of cardboard laid on the table. The spelling out of a message in this way is often speedier than automatic writing, for the pointer may move

with great rapidity. Sometimes two sitters place their hands simultaneously on the travelling pointer, and find it advantageous as regards the clearness of the messages.

Spirit Communications

Spirit communications through an entranced medium are often more satisfactory and evidential than those obtained by other methods, for the medium's own personality is more thoroughly excluded. The spirit controlling an entranced medium is usually one of his own personal guides, who may act as spokesmen for a spirit friend. When the spirit friend himself controls the medium, the tone of the voice and manner of delivery may closely resemble those of the friend. If controlled by the spirit of a Frenchman, Italian or Greek, the medium will speak in these languages. If controlled by an erudite spirit he will speak in a learned way, and *vice versa*. The famous trance medium, Cora L. V. Richmond, when only fifteen years of age, discoursed under trance control on any subject suggested a minute before by the audience. On the subject, for instance, of "The Influence of Aryan Philosophy upon the Philosophy of Modern Times" she gave

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an eloquent lecture, logical and replete with erudition not possessed by savants among the audience.

Some trance mediums devote themselves to helping people to communicate with their departed friends, and many have been the means of bringing untold happiness to mourners who despairingly believed that their beloved ones were lost to them for ever.

Communications from spirit friends, whatever the method employed vary much in evidential value, i.e., the content of the messages may, or may not, be sufficient to prove conclusively that it is our friend who speaks. The spirit world surrounds us on all sides, and spirits of all kinds are ever ready to get into touch if facilities are offered, consequently, it is not always the friend we desire who comes. Often strangers come and talk, and some, lacking in moral rectitude, may pretend to be old friends, either with a view to receiving attention or, by way of a joke, to mislead and confound. With good experienced mediums such difficulties are rare, *but with undeveloped, inexperienced mediums confusion and uncertainty are inevitable.*

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To communicate with spirit friends is usually a difficult and uncertain matter. It may become easy, however, if one devotes time and patience to the endeavour, and keeps in close touch with a friendly medium, or, better still, if one develops mediumship oneself. Spirits who purport to be our friends may at first have great difficulty in proving their identity, because communications between the two worlds, even when both parties desire it, is no simple matter. It might be likened to using a defective, long-distance telephone, through which the tone of the voice is unrecognisable and the words feeble and confused owing to discontinuities and the jamming effect of other speakers. Later when, by practice, experience is acquired, difficulties disappear.

When trying to get into touch with a spirit friend through a medium much depends on whether the mentalities or psychic effluences of sitter and medium harmonise. While with one sitter a medium's psychic faculties may be at their best, with another they may be almost inoperative. And similarly, at a mediumistic seance where there are several sitters, success depends greatly on the mental states of the various sitters, for the presence of even one who is unsympa-

thetic or antagonistic may be sufficient, with sensitive mediums, to prevent all phenomena. For this reason séances with promiscuous sitters should be avoided as far as practicable.

The phenomenon of trance control has been much studied by savants, and, as a result, many eminent, learned men, who for years were confirmed sceptics, have been converted to the belief that our friends who have "died" still live, and, under certain conditions, can communicate with us through suitable mediums. In many cases the proof is so cogent and clear that no reasonable person can doubt it. Perhaps the most decisive proof is the fact that an entranced medium can carry on a conversation with a foreign sitter in his own language, which may be one quite unknown to the medium. The only *reasonable* explanation of this phenomenon is that it is the sitter's spirit friend who speaks through the entranced medium, using the language with which it was familiar in earth life. If more proof be needed for the reality of spirit intercourse, there is available a vast accumulation of records of evidential communications, which forms a mass of evidence that is quite overwhelming.

. Telepathy

Telepathy is the faculty by which people can read the unuttered thoughts or feelings in the minds of others. It is a supernormal one, for in the majority of people it is never in evidence. In a few it is rudimentary; in mediums it is strongly developed, for in them, as just seen, the subconscious mind is accessible to telepathic impressions from spirits incarnate and discarnate. Many carefully planned experiments have been made to test whether or not thoughts can be conveyed between individuals, through space, telepathically and the reality of the faculty has been proved repeatedly to the satisfaction of many well-known scientific men. With good mediums, between whom there is a bond of sympathy, distance appears to be of no account. The phenomenon, although recognised and accepted, is still inexplicable, and how thoughts are transferred is a profound mystery. The fact that their transference is arbitrary and uncertain indicates the existence of psychical influences not under control of the experimenters.

Telepathy between the minds of the medium and sitter is often urged by sceptics as an explanation of all spirit communications. But this is

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not consistent with our knowledge of telepathy as obtained experimentally, which shows that, between those still in earth life, it is feeble and uncertain, and something quite different from the telepathic messages received by a medium from an external spirit. The latter are often prompt and precise, and they may contain abundant and unexpected details of long-forgotten incidents and show knowledge of things unknown either to the medium or sitter. Then, again, telepathy cannot explain how a medium may speak to a sitter or write messages in an unknown foreign language.

Clairvoyance

Clairvoyance is the faculty by which a medium is able to perceive or gain intimate knowledge of things, past, present, or future, independently of the ordinary senses.* It varies greatly both in power and character. While in some mediums it is only rudimentary, in others there seems to be scarcely any limit to its possibilities. In all cases it is inconstant and evanescent. If there is an

* In common with other supernormal mental phenomena, clairvoyance is often referred to by the all-embracing terms,—*psychic-cognition*, *crystallesia*, or *metagnomy*.

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effort made to perceive, as when a test is demanded, there may be no success, but later, when mental tranquility prevails, the faculty may operate freely.

Some well-developed clairvoyants can read closed books, or letters enclosed in opaque envelopes, do fine needle-work in the dark, or see the whereabouts of lost property and describe the circumstances of its loss. Some are able to diagnose diseases, and describe accurately the nature of internal disorders beyond the range of ordinary medical knowledge. And some can do this just as well in the case of a far-off patient whom they have never seen. Dr. Eugene Osty, Director of the International Metapsychic Institute, Paris, has made a special study of the clairvoyant faculty (as applied to human personalities), which he terms "Metagnomy," and has recorded a large number of remarkable instances in his book, "Supernormal Faculties in Man" (English translation by Mr. Stanley De Brath, Lond., 1923).

One of the most remarkable clairvoyant mediums at the present time is M. Ludwig Kahn. His clairvoyant faculty consists principally in reading unseen writings, and a good account of it will be found in the *Revue Metapsychique*, No. 2, for

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1925, and in the *Journal* of the American Society for Psychical Research for October, 1925. His usual procedure is to ask each of the sitters, perhaps from four to six in number, to write something on a sheet of paper. They do this while he is in another room, and each folds his paper in eight, so that they are all alike. Kahn then enters the room and asks one of the sitters to collect the papers, mix them and redistribute them. He then passes from one sitter to another and tells each correctly what is written on the paper he holds in his hand, and also says which particular sitter wrote it. It should be observed that telepathy from the minds of the sitters is excluded as an explanation, because no sitter knows what paper is being read until it is opened.

The faculty of travelling clairvoyance is specially interesting, for it seems to annihilate space. At the request of a sitter the medium, who is usually entranced, will, in effect, proceed to find someone, or go to some specified place, describe his supposed journey, how he has now arrived perhaps in a room in a strange house, which, with its occupants and their doings, he will describe with sufficient detail to permit of subsequent verification. He may be asked to go and find what a

distant friend is doing; with some mediums the name of the friend alone suffices, but others require some article belonging to him, an influence from which enables him to establish rapport and describe his present doings and surrounding.

Crystal Visions

Many clairvoyant mediums see at odd times all kinds of visions, which may obtrude themselves without purpose on their notice. Some evoke them best by gazing at an object having a smooth or polished surface, which seems to calm the mind or produce a suitable condition of nascent trance. A small sphere of glass, known as a "crystal," has been used for ages as a means of inducing visions.

The pictures seen in the crystal are like those observed on the focussing screen of a camera, i.e., they are living pictures, and are as diverse as those seen casually every day. They often seem to be quite purposeless, and remain unverified as representing actualities. Often, however, they are reproductions of veritable contemporaneous happenings, or of things seen in the past or future, perhaps the next day or only a few minutes later. By means of the crystal some medi-

ums can see events in the past and future of a sitter. The latter usually holds the crystal for a few minutes, when it becomes affected by his aura or influence, so that when the medium takes it, it has the quality of a psychometric specimen.

Psychometry

Psychometry is the peculiar clairvoyant faculty by which certain mediums, while in the normal state, can perceive incidents connected with any object to which they may direct their attention. If given, say, a piece of wood or stone brought from some place of historical or other interest, a good psychometrist will describe the place in detail, and various incidents in its history. Similarly, on merely holding a person's hand, he will describe his character, state of health, and various incidents in his life, past, present and future. And he will do the same for a distant friend, if given a lock of his hair or merely something he has written or handled. This presentation of an article to a medium is a common method of assisting him to get into touch with a friend who has passed over, the lock of hair, or whatever it is, serving as a sort of connecting link.

Lost property has been traced and many crimes unravelled by the help of a good psychometrist.

The spirit people rarely care to assist in hunting down criminals, for they are not usually in sympathy with our notions of retributive justice, but guidance from the beyond is not essential to a clairvoyant medium when unfolding the past, present or future.

Precognition

The faculty of precognition is one possessed by many mediums. Its reality can easily be tested for almost any good clairvoyant medium will describe future events in a sitter's life, and even in that of a friend who is not present. It should be observed, however, that, mixed up with accurate statements, there is often much which is erroneous. Many accurate predictions of important events have been published.

The Great War was predicted on June 19th, 1914, by a Greek girl, Sophie, aged 18, during hypnosis induced by Dr. Antoniou of Athens. The doctor wrote down her statements and mentioned them during June and July to eighteen well-known citizens of Athens. Later, on realising their importance, he published them in the Athens' newspaper, "To Asty," for August 24th to 27th. The following are some of the things said by Sophie, in reply to questions.

The war will begin "in about two months." "The war will be long"—"Millions will die, for this war will be savage." "Unimaginable destructions will take place"—"Thrones will be upset. Ancient states will be dissolved and new ones created. The end of the war will be followed by a long period of negotiations."—"The Triple Entente will be victorious in the end"—"Germany will be an Empire no longer. The economic consequences of the war will be terrible for her"—"The Austrian Empire will be decomposed into its constituent elements." Further details of this most important precognition, nearly all of which were accurate, will be found in the *Revue Metapsychique* for December, 1925.

Teleplasm and Physical Mediums

It is not known exactly in what respect the organism of a medium differs from that of ordinary people, but it has been ascertained that the production of objective phenomena depends on their ability to emit a mysterious substance variously termed *teleplasm*, *ectoplasm*, *psychoplasm* or *idcoplasm*.

The fact that teleplasm is essential to the production of physical phenomena has long been

known to spiritualists, for it was described in spirit communications as long ago as 1867 (see Kardec's *Book of Mediums*, p. 91) and it has often been seen from that time to the present day. Recent experiments by eminent European scientists, working with exceptionally gifted mediums, have established its reality beyond dispute, for it has been observed at close quarters, handled and photographed by flashlight; and several scientific monographs have been written describing it in detail, with many photographs showing its various modes of manifestation, and the human-like forms it may assume.

Teleplasm may exude in a visible, pasty state from any part or any aperture of a medium's body, or it may be emitted as a sort of vapour, visible or invisible. It is a substance essentially different from all other forms of matter. It is not inert or stable, but can change its condition almost instantly from an invisible, vaporous state, to a visible pasty, or solid one, and *vice versa*. It is usually white or grey in colour. It can assume luminosity, and become warm or cold, soft or hard. It is ponderable and can convey force and energy. It may take the form of long arm-like protrusions or extensions from the me-

medium's body, visible or invisible, which can seize and manipulate objects at a distance. Although it may operate at a distance of many feet and appear to be detached and independent there seems always to be a connection with the medium. It is imbued with life, for it can move and change its shape, and mould itself into the semblance of any part, or the whole, of a living body, anatomically perfect. It has independent vitality which enables it to react to some intelligent formative power either inherent in it, or communicated by some external intelligence. This intelligence may be that of the medium himself, but usually it appears to be that of an external spirit which is in control of the medium's subconscious mind while in the trance state.

Teleplasm is an essential agent in all mediumistic phenomena in which matter is affected, as, say, the telekinetic movement of an untouched object. Spirit, mind, or will power being without material attributes, cannot convey (in the ordinary way) the mechanical forces necessary to produce effects on ordinary lifeless matter. Living matter is exceptional in that it can be acted upon directly by mind. The human hand, for instance, though

composed of matter, is under the direct control of the mind, acting through the brain and nerves. If we will our hand to write, it does so, but why or how the thought is converted into action is a profound mystery. Teleplasmic extensions from a medium's body are under the control of the medium's subconscious mind in a similar way. And just as a medium's hand may be controlled to write a letter or lift an object either by his own will power or by that of an external spirit acting through his subconscious mind, so may a teleplasmic arm-like protrusion (which can assume all the physical and anatomical features of any part, or the whole, of a human body) be controlled to produce similar effects.

Teleplasm proceeding from the body of a medium, has been observed to elevate an untouched object like a table, and with such force that the full weight of a man could not depress it. This class of phenomenon usually occurs only in dim red light, but the teleplasm has been seen and photographed by flash light, and has the appearance of a white column or strut supporting the table from below. Dr. Crawford's extensive series of experiments and those of other researchers have established these facts, and Crawford's book

Psychic Structures (Lond.) includes photographic reproductions of the teleplasmic struts.

It should be observed that no rules or explanations can be given that are generally applicable to all psychic phenomena, for the character of the latter varies in every possible way. Thus, while teleplasm would seem to be essential to the production of telekinetic phenomena (the movement of untouched objects) in the séance room, there are other phenomena of a similar character in which it would seem not to be necessary, for example, the phenomenon of apports, in which objects may be transported from a great distance.

Materialisation

The phenomenon of materialisation, as usually understood, is the temporary creation of a living human body, in whole or in part, which is vitalised by a spirit. Though common in the past, they are now rare, and are usually limited to hands (which may be felt) or faces. The faces may be seen in the darkened séance room by means of a prepared phosphorescent slate, or by a psychic light provided by the spirit, or they may be self-luminous. Sometimes they are recognised as friends of the sitters, and they may say a few words.

Formerly, full-size, completely materialised forms were not uncommon, and they were so anatomically perfect that they could walk about the séance room and talk, and do anything that an ordinary individual can do. In California, similar phenomena can be observed today.

In 1874 Sir William Crookes, F.R.S., made extensive experiments with the medium, Florence Cook, then aged 17 years, who stayed with him in his own house in London; and in his book, *Phenomena of Spiritualism*, he describes with great detail the human characteristics of the spirit, Katie King, who frequently materialised, and, during her stay of an hour or so, behaved like one of the family. The literature of Spiritualism abounds with authentic records of wonderful materialisations which, in view of their present rarity, are well worth studying.

The materialised form is built up from teleplasm withdrawn from the medium, who shrinks in bulk and weight proportionately to the amount yielded; in many cases, however, the sitters unconsciously contribute. Dr. Crawford's medium, Miss Goligher, sat on a weighing machine and he records that on one occasion her weight was reduced by 54½ pounds by the withdrawal of tele-

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plasm. The weight of the materialised form varies, and it may be increased or diminished at the request of the sitters ; finally, of course, it becomes zero when dematerialisation occurs and the teleplasm returns to the medium.

Materialisations only occur in the dark, or in a dimly lighted room, and a small curtained off space termed a "cabinet" is provided, in which the medium may sit in the dark and be protected from the gaze of the sitters, which has an obstructive effect on all objective phenomena. The spirit usually builds up in the cabinet close to the medium (from teleplasm which is probably emitted in a vaporous state and then condensed) and then walks out into the séance room. Sometimes they build up in full view, slowly or suddenly; and again dematerialise in full view, slowly or suddenly, usually by apparently sinking into the floor.

The formation in the séance room of paraffin-wax moulds of materialised hands or feet is a phenomenon which has frequently been observed since 1876. If we dip a hand or foot in melted paraffin and withdraw it, it will be clothed with a thin waxen glove. If now the hand or foot could be withdrawn from the glove, the latter would

form a very perfect mould, which, if filled with liquid plaster of paris, would result—when the plaster solidified and the paraffin was melted off—in an exact replica in plaster of the hand or foot, on which the fine texture of the skin would be faithfully reproduced. A human hand or foot cannot, however, be withdrawn from an adhesive wax mould through the small wrist portion without distorting or rupturing it (and more particularly if the fingers are crossed and the wax glove is thin), but that of a materialised spirit can be, by simply dematerialising it in place. Moulds so obtained form a permanent and convincing proof of the reality of the materialised spirit, for no human being can produce the same thing. Many illustrations of these moulds will be found in the *Revue Metapsychique* (Paris) No. 5 for 1922, and in *Psychic Science* (London) No. 2 for 1922.

Spirit Raps

The spirit rap is one of the commonest physical phenomena, not all mediums obtain them, however, for they require physical mediumship. Though loudest in the dark, they are often heard in good light. Dr. Crawford ascertained that the

raps he observed required the withdrawal of teleplasm from the medium, more or less according as the raps were loud or soft. Spirits do not only make rapping noises, for they can reproduce with marvellous similitude sounds of every conceivable kind. They can imitate any musical instrument, and such sounds as the sawing of wood, hammering of nails, the wind and rain, trickling and splashing of water, breaking of crockery, an aeroplane, locomotive, or prancing horse have all been faithfully reproduced.

The word "rap" conveys a wrong idea of the sound, for it cannot be truthfully imitated. It is a muffled, percussive sound, of almost infinitely varied character, which usually seems to come from within the substance of an object. It varies in intensity from the tiniest tick to deep thuds or clod-hammer blows. They usually occur in the vicinity of the medium, but when the power is strong they may come from distant parts of the room.

Raps are generally used as signals when it is desired to communicate through the alphabet, for when this is read through, a rap will be made when the required letter is reached.

Table Movements and Levitation

Sometimes, instead of a rap, the table on which the sitters place their hands is tilted when the right letter is reached. When a small light table is used there is little doubt that in most cases the tilting is the result of impulses subconsciously made by the medium, whose arms are controlled in the same way as the hand of the automatic writer is controlled. With strong physical mediums, however, the table movements may be quite independent of the muscles of the medium or sitters. In such cases the spirit operators seem actually to animate the table, so that it appears to be alive. Although only just touched on the top, it will walk about the room or climb upstairs. It can join in the sitters' laughter, by little jerks, thrills and spasmodic quivers. It can stamp its feet with impatience or anger; show doubt and hesitation when answering a question, or quick and ready affirmation. A good account of what the table can do will be found in Sir Oliver Lodge's *Raymond* (pp. 222, 223).

A common séance-room phenomenon is the lifting and displacement of objects small and large. Usually the object has to be touched by the medium and sitters, but often no touch is needed, the

phenomenon being then termed "telekinetic." Small tables are often lifted, but large, heavy ones have also been lifted, and sometimes with one or two men sitting on the top, and even a grand piano has been lifted from the floor. The medium himself has sometimes been lifted. The celebrated D. D. Home was levitated repeatedly and floated round the room over the heads of the sitters. Sir William Crookes, F.R.S., frequently observed this phenomenon, and in his *Phenomena of Spiritualism*, p. 90, says:—"To reject the recorded evidence on this subject is to reject all human testimony whatever; for no fact in sacred or profane history is supported by a stronger array of proofs."

Cold Winds

At séances for physical phenomena cold winds are often felt. Sir William Crookes, referring to this in his *Phenomena of Spiritualism* (p. 86), says:—"—I may say every kind of phenomenon is generally preceded by a peculiar cold air, sometimes amounting to a decided wind. I have had sheets of paper blown about by it, and a thermometer lowered several degrees. On one occasion, which I will subsequently give more in detail, I

have not detected any actual movement of the air, but the cold wind has been so intense that I could only compare it to that felt when the hand has been within a few inches of frozen mercury."

Mr. Harry Price used a registering thermometer at a séance with the medium, Stella C. and observed a reduction of temperature of 20.5 degs. Fahr. (see his book *Stella C.*, Lond. 1925).

Fire Tests

Spirits are able to deal with fire; to create or extinguish it, deprive it of its power to burn, or confer on combustible things immunity from its effects. By virtue of this power the medium may place his hands in flame, or grasp red-hot objects without injury. D. D. Home often exhibited this phenomenon. On many occasions he was seen to stir the fire with his hands, lift a lump of red-hot coal and carry it round the room. And he could confer immunity from burning to others, for when sitters were given the red-hot coal they also held it without injury. On several occasions Home placed his face and head among the red-hot coals in the grate, and not a hair was singed. Many other mediums have exhibited immunity from the effects of fire. In 1917 Mrs. Annie

Hunter lifted a red-hot log from the fire and carried it round the room, and she handed it to Mrs. De Crespigny who held it without injury. The "Fire Ordeal" is still practised by some barbarian peoples: a rough pavement of stones is made red-hot by burning over it for many hours a large wood fire, and afterwards a number of natives walk with bare feet over the red-hot stones. And there are authentic records of Europeans having followed them without injury.

Apports

The phenomenon of apports is the conveyance of material objects, large or small, into a room the containing walls of which have no apertures through which they can pass. It is a fairly common phenomenon, but usually occurs only in the dark. With specially gifted mediums the variety of the apports is amazing, living animals, birds, birds' eggs, fish, reptiles, plants, flowers, fruits, earth, snow, books, curios, etc., have all formed apports at one séance or another. As the phenomenon involves the passage of matter through matter, we can only conceive it as being accomplished by the dematerialisation of the article, which, in its then attenuated or etheric state, is

introduced into the séance room and there materialised back into its former state. On arrival the apports are sometimes very hot, which would indicate that they had recently been subjected to compression.

There have been many celebrated apport mediums, and the phenomenon is still occasionally observed. The celebrated non-professional medium, Mrs. Guppy (née Nichol), excelled in apport phenomena. The following quotation is from a description of one of her séances given by Alfred Russel Wallace, F.R.S., in his *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*, p. 164:—

“The most remarkable feature of this lady’s mediumship is the production of flowers and fruits in closed rooms. The first time this occurred was at my own house, at a very[”] early stage of her development. All present were my own friends. Miss Nichol had come early to tea, it being mid-winter, and she had been with us in a very warm, gas-lighted room for hours before the flowers appeared. The essential fact is that, upon a bare table in a small room, closed and dark (the adjoining room and passage being well lighted), a quantity of flowers appeared, which were not there when we put out the gas a few minutes before.

They consisted of anemones, tulips, chrysanthemums, Chinese primroses, and several ferns. All were absolutely fresh, as if just gathered from a conservatory. They were covered with a fine, cold dew. Not a petal was crumpled or broken, not the most delicate point or pinnule of the ferns was out of place.—Similar phenomena have occurred hundreds of times since in many houses and under various conditions. Sometimes the flowers have been in vast quantities, heaped upon the table. Often flowers or fruits asked for are brought. A friend of mine asked for a sunflower, and one six feet high fell upon the table, having a large mass of earth about its roots.”

Direct Voice

In the presence of a suitable medium, spirits can talk in a voice which does not proceed from the medium. This is known as the *direct* or *independent* voice. They may speak in the tones of robust manhood or the thin treble of a child, accents, whether Scotch, Irish or American, being truthfully rendered. With most mediums the voice only occurs in perfect darkness. Spirit friends usually find difficulty in speaking for the first time, and consequently their voice may be

whispering and indistinct, as conversation proceeds it improves, and if the sittings are repeated it may become recognisable. To assist weak speakers a trumpet or megaphone is provided which magnifies the voice.

The spirits usually indicate their presence in the room by moving the trumpet about and touching the sitters with it, its movements being seen in the dark by coating it with luminous paint. Sometimes luminous faces are faintly seen in the dark, and floating spirit lights. At the present time in England and America there are several good direct-voice mediums, professional and non-professional. If the conditions are good and there are several sitters, all sorts of conversations with spirit friends may be heard. Different spirits not only speak with different voices and accents, and in every language, but remarkable good singing and whistling are often heard.

Apparently the *modus operandi* of the spirits when communicating with the direct voice is to materialise sufficiently to be able to speak. They evidently create a larynx or its equivalent, from teleplasm withdrawn from the medium or sitters just as they do at materialisation séances when they show themselves fully formed and talk to the sitters.

Many tests have been made to prove that the direct voice is not produced by the medium's vocal organs. Often a sitter will hold his hand tightly on the medium's mouth. Sometimes his lips are sealed with plaster, and sometimes he has held water in his mouth, which is ejected after the voices have been heard and the light is switched on. Quite recently the question has been definitely settled by an experiment with Mrs. Crandon ("Margery," the wife of Dr. Crandon, the famous Boston surgeon), whose long-continued, self-sacrificing efforts to assist in solving the mysteries of her mediumship deserve the highest praise. She held in her mouth the end of a flexible tube connected with one end of a vertical U-shaped glass tube half full of water. As she blew into the tube the water rose, and while the voice spoke in the darkness the water level was seen, by means of a luminous float, not to vary. - The flexible tube was incompressible, and had a glass mouthpiece with three holes in it, so placed that one could be covered with the tongue and the other two with the lips. If any hole was uncovered for a second, by movement of the lips or tongue as required for speech, the water level fell and thus indicated the fact. This apparatus is illustrated in the *Journal* of the American SPR for Dec., 1925.

word or two; or a statement or message covering both slates.

Sir William Crookes, F.R.S., speaking of direct spirit writing, says in his *Phenomena of Spiritualism*:—"I have had words and messages repeatedly written on privately marked paper, under the most rigid test conditions, and have heard the pencil moving over the paper in the dark. The conditions—prearranged by myself—have been so strict as to be equally convincing to my mind as if I had seen the written characters formed."

Vice-Admiral Moore observed some wonderful direct writing through the unique mediumship of the Misses Bangs of Chicago. He journeyed specially from England to see them, and he records his experiences in his book *Glimpses of the Next State*. Their method was to ask the sitter to write privately a letter to a spirit friend asking questions on any matter, and enclose it, together with blank sheets for the spirit's reply, in a sealed envelope. The letter was then deposited between two hinged slates, which were laid on the table in front of the sitter, who placed his hands on them. The medium sat on the opposite side of the table and did not touch the slates. There was bright daylight throughout the séance. After a period

varying from a few minutes to an hour or more, raps signalled that the reply was written, the sitter then opened the slates, took his letter saw that the seals were unbroken, opened it and found one or more of the blank sheets filled with writing in ink. The caligraphy was not usually that of the sitter's spirit friend; but the reply showed knowledge, more or less thorough, of the subjects referred to, and in many cases the identity of the spirit sender was established to the satisfaction of the sitter.

Direct Portraiture

The Misses Bangs also obtained coloured portraits of spirit friends of the sitters, openly, in bright daylight. The mode of procedure was as follows:—A plain wood table was placed lengthwise across the séance room window, which looked out on the street. The Bangs sisters sat one at each end of the table, and the sitter at the side, facing the window and less than a yard away from it. Two simple wooden frames on which thin paper-mounted canvas was stretched, were placed face to face with the paper surfaces in contact. These were then held up together close to the window,

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with their lower edges resting on the table; each medium gripped a side with one hand, and thus held them erect and together. An opaque blind was drawn down to the top of the frames and a short curtain was hung on either side, so that the window was darkened except for the light which streamed through the translucent canvas.

In about fifteen minutes, more or less, tints of different colour appeared on the canvas; parts became opaque, then translucent again, and vague outlines of faces appeared and disappeared in different places, finally the picture grew rapidly and was finished. The frames were taken down and separated, and the picture was found to be on the paper surface of the one next the sitter. Vice-Admiral Moore obtained in this way a very good portrait of a lady friend who had passed over, and presented it to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 16, Queensberry Place, S.W., where it is on view.

Psychic Photography

The phenomenon of spirit photography has probably been more studied than any other, and several books have been published dealing

with it alone, each reproducing some of the many well vouched for examples of the phenomenon. Like other psychic phenomena it requires the presence of a suitable medium, and at the present time these are rare. The medium need have no knowledge of photography, for all he need really do is to hold the packet of plates or the loaded dark-slides for a few minutes, or merely be present in the room when the photograph is taken.

In a successful psychic photograph the negative shows, in addition to the sitter, a plainly recognisable likeness of a friend who has passed over. This "extra," as it is termed, is usually swathed in white substance, resembling gossamer, cotton wool, or vapour, which by its appearance suggests the presence of teleplasm; occasionally, however, it is in everyday attire. The majority of psychic photographs are ill defined and imperfect. Sometimes they include several well-defined but unrecognised extras. Sometimes only cloudy white markings occur which may obliterate the sitter; these are evidently of psychic origin, for their presence is otherwise quite inexplicable.

In psychic photography it is not essential that the plate should be exposed in a camera,

for on many occasions plates taken direct from an unopened packet (after it has been handled for a few minutes by the medium) and developed forthwith have borne the likeness of a friend; or written messages, which may be in a foreign language unknown to the medium and sitters.

Many people on visiting a psychic photographer have obtained an undoubted likeness of a spirit friend, fraud on the part of the photographer having been entirely precluded by simply taking care that they were unknown to him and that he was not even aware of their intended visit. An excellent instance of a recognisable psychic photograph of a spirit friend is that of the late Dr. Geley, obtained by Mr. Stanley De Brath on 24th July, 1924, exactly nine days after his death by accident. A reproduction of the photograph and an account of the test conditions under which it was taken will be found in *Psychic Science* (Lond.), for October, 1924.

Haunting Spirits

The phenomenon of the haunted house is familiar to everyone, if not by personal experience, by the numerous ghost stories one hears

or reads. There is an immense amount of literature in all languages on the subject, and the truth of many of the accounts is so well vouched for that no serious enquirer can doubt it. The cause of hauntings is obscure. It is probably due in most cases to troubled earth-bound spirits who, finding little happiness in spirit life and failing to progress, are fain to return to the familiar scenes of earth life. Apparently in most cases the cause inciting or compelling them to return is that they are filled with regrets or remorse for an ill-spent life or some selfish act or crime they have committed, and, through constantly brooding over it, are attracted to the place of its commission.

A ghost may be regarded as a spontaneous materialization, which, like those of the séance room, may be more or less immaterial and translucent. When seen simultaneously by several people who are not all mediums, it is probably sufficiently materialised to affect a photographic plate. Old houses are the most often haunted, because some of the numerous people who have lived in them are likely to have led the kind of earth life which is followed by a remorseful spirit life.

Haunting spirits may come and go for long periods regardless of the presence or absence of observers. Like the materialised spirits of the séance room, if they are interfered with, they vanish. In the presence of a medium they and their manifestations gain strength. In many cases they have been interviewed by a medium and have related the cause of their trouble; and sometimes, by carrying out some simple desire, the need for which they seem to entertain as a sort of hallucination, their minds have been set at rest and they have quickly given up the haunting habit.

Poltergeists

Among our fellow creatures, civilised and barbarian, there are many who delight in a practical joke. With brutal unsympathetic people the more mischief the greater the fun, and when such people die they take their mischievous propensities with them undiminished, and may still indulge their delight in horse-play by producing the manifestations known as "poltergeist disturbances."

The German word, *poltergeist*, means literally a boisterous ghost; it is an appropriate term

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because the manifestations are often of a wild, mischievous and destructive character. They take many forms, the commonest is the throwing of stones or other objects within or around a particular house, the breaking of windows or crockery, distracting noises, the ringing of bells, the derangement of household furniture; more rarely the sprinkling of water, setting fire to property, etc. They have occurred at all periods of the world's history. The poor past centuries witches were often made the victims, for, in the absence of any assignable cause for the disturbance, any old woman or child who seemed to be associated with it was blamed as the originator and burned as a witch.

The literature of Spiritualism abounds with well authenticated accounts of poltergeist phenomena. They are extraordinarily numerous, and, indeed, are probably of daily occurrence somewhere in the world. The ignorant commonly attribute them to practical jokers, an assumption which is strengthened by newspaper accounts, in which, after a few humorous articles, it is usually jocosely announced that a confession has been made by some irresponsible young person supposed to be implicated.

Though the facts are plainly of a nature entirely beyond the capabilities of any human being, and may be attested by dozens of intelligent people, the bogus confession is always gladly accepted by the ignorant public.

There are few psychical phenomena better established than that of the poltergeist. These and allied cases of haunting, have occurred so often under the eyes of competent observers and have been so well and continuously recorded in current literature that only the ignorant and the credulous now accept the practical joker as an explanation.

Poltergeist phenomena do not seem invariably to require the actual presence of a medium, although they are usually clearly dependent on some one who is a medium and who is usually resident in the house. They are much more impressive than séance room phenomena, because the effects produced are more prodigious and are not subject to the limitations of the séance room, where little can be accomplished without a powerful medium, comparative darkness and suitable sitters. They may continue day after day, for hours together, in bright daylight, in the presence of crowds of hostile spectators. In fact, just as the artificial

thunder and lightning of the laboratory are feeble compared with those of nature, so are the evoked phenomena of the séance room feeble in comparison with those spontaneously produced by the poltergeist. It is because of their independence of conditions and their spontaneous character that they are so impressive; they indicate clearly the actual presence of invisible spirit beings, possessing extraordinary power over matter.

The Double

The belief that within our material body there is an etheric counterpart or spirit body, which leaves it at death and, in certain individuals, can leave it temporarily during life and make itself visible to others at a distance, is well supported by the frequently observed appearance of the *double*, which may be defined as a perfectly life-like apparition of an individual who is at that moment in another place. Spontaneous examples of this phenomenon are very abundant; the elaborate two-volume work, *Phantasms of the living* (by Gurney, Myers and Podmore), contains many well-authenticated cases, and there are also many authentic cases of its

production experimentally. That it is an objective reality, and not the result of hallucination, is evident from the fact that it is often seen simultaneously by several independent observers, also by animals, and it has been photographed. Though usually silent, it sometimes speaks.

The power to project at will the spirit body or double is a rare faculty in mediums. By the usual experimental method of procedure, the experimenter, or *agent*, just before retiring to rest at night, determines, with a concentrated effort of will to visit, in spirit, a friend, the *percipient*, who is unaware of the experiment. Next day or later, if the experiment has succeeded, the friend tells him of how he has seen him during the night. The power is very uncertain and erratic. Success and failure come when least expected. While on one occasion an experimenter may exercise the greatest mental effort and fail, on another occasion, when only casually thinking of his friend, he may succeed.

The double often occurs when the agent is dreaming of the percipient, and these cases seem to prove that, with certain individuals, the spirit can leave the body when asleep; and

sometimes the dreamer remembers his dream, and is able to give a verifiable account of his spirit's doings.

With some people the desire to be in a familiar place may have the effect of projecting their double or spirit body to that place, so that it can be seen by anyone who happens to be there. The phenomenon is fairly common. It usually occurs when the agent is journeying to the place, and is probably directing his thoughts there in anticipation of his arrival.

The most favourable time for apparitions of the living is at moments when the agent is suffering mental stress of any kind. This condition often occurs just before death, or during illness, accident or fright, or with those who are on the point of drowning. In most cases the actual spirit or double is not seen, but merely impresses the percipient clairvoyantly or clairaudently with a knowledge of his condition, more or less precise and detailed.

Spiritual Healing

The most beneficial phase of mediumship for mankind is undoubtedly healing mediumship. Healing mediums have always been numerous, and all the most famous have been of the male

sex. They vary greatly in their characteristics and methods; some know little or nothing of Spiritualism or mediumship, but are merely aware of the fact that their touch has a curative effect on the pains and diseases of others, and in many cases they only discover it accidentally. In the other extreme the healer is a well-developed trance medium, whose controlling spirit usually claims to have been a doctor or medicine-man in earth life, and has acquired in spirit life knowledge which enables him so to affect the human organism that diseased tissues are speedily renovated. The cures effected may appear to be instantaneous, or follow as a result of progressive treatment.

In many healers a curative influence seems to be inherent in their organism, so that they are independent of external spirit aid. They possess a kind of vital energy or "magnetism," which, passing from them to the sufferer, vitalises his decadent tissues. Probably the patient's own natural recuperative powers are sufficiently reinforced and quickened by suggestion, and by the curative influence of the healer, to produce rapidly the desired remedial effect.

Those sceptical of the healing power of mediums and of spiritual healing generally, while admitting wonderful cures, attribute all to the power of suggestion. We have seen that the subconscious mind has inherent powers of control over the physical organism, and that it may be readily influenced to exert them under suggestion, given either in the hypnotic or normal state. But while in many cases suggestion may play an important part, in others it does not, for infants too young or too ill to appreciate their position have been the subject of miraculous cures.

There have been many notable healing mediums, and the literature of Spiritualism abounds with records of their numerous cures. The Bible accounts of the miraculous cures effected by Christ and his disciples have been paralleled over and over again, and identical phenomena have never ceased to occur.

Different healers have different methods of treatment. While one will merely hold the hand of the sufferer, another will place his hand on the seat of the disease or breathe on it, and yet another, in an apparently similar case, will make passes or employ manipulations of vari-

ous kinds. And while one healer will be silent and entirely matter-of-fact, another will pray aloud and exhort the sufferer to have faith and he will be cured.

Miraculous cures of apparently spontaneous character have long been associated with certain places, usually regarded as sacred. Those, for example, which occur at Lourdes, and at the tomb of the Abbé Paris; at Treves in Germany and Holywell in Wales. In many cases the cures are truly miraculous, for they are instantaneous and involve the renewal of parts that have disappeared entirely through disease.

A remarkable instance of the latter type is the cure of Pierre de Rudder, of Jabbeke, Belgium, an account of which will be found in *Preuves Medicales du Miracle*, by Dr. Le Bec (Paris, 1918). De Rudder was a woodcutter, and in Feb., 1867, when 44 years of age, a tree fell on his left leg, breaking both tibia and fibula. The flesh of the calf ulcerated and became an open, gangrenous wound, from which detached fragments of bone were taken. He refused amputation and for eight years the wound remained open and purulent. The ends of the bones were more than an inch apart.

They could be forced out of the wound, and were seen to be darkened and decayed; and the foot could be turned round so that the heel was in front and the toes behind.

On the 7th April, 1875, de Rudder was lifted into the train for Oostakker. Thence he went to the Grotto by omnibus, the conductor of which complained of the defilement of the floor by the blood and pus which flowed from the diseased leg. On arrival at the Grotto he sat exhausted on a bench. Suddenly he felt a peculiar agitation, and at that moment his leg was healed, for he immediately got up and walked *briskly*, without his crutches and *without even a limp*. On examining the leg the bones were found to be solidly united and the wound was closed and cicatrized.

The case is well authenticated because de Rudder was an interesting subject to numerous doctors and surgeons who frequently examined him. The wound was bandaged on the three days immediately preceding the cure, and subsequent examination showed that the cure was complete and perfect. De Rudder resumed his occupation and died 23 years later at the age of 75. Subsequently his body was exhumed and

the bones of the leg were found to be strongly united, though misshapen at the junction. But there was not the slightest shortening, portions of new bone of proper length having been introduced at the time of the cure. The bones are well illustrated in Dr. Bec's book.

Origin of Phenomena

The origin of mediumistic phenomena is often questioned. Uninformed spiritualists believe that all are due to the intervention of discarnate spirits ; this, however, is by no means the case, for, as noticed elsewhere, the undying spirit which is in each of us possesses faculties similar to those possessed by free discarnate spirits, and, in the case of mediums, can produce supernormal phenomena unaided. This is evidently true in the case of mental phenomena such as telepathy, clairvoyance and precognition, but it is not so evident in the case of objective phenomena. Thus, while it is conceivable that a medium may be able to externalise a psychic force that will cause movement of an external object, it is inconceivable that his spirit unaided can produce, for example, such a condition in the human body as will make it impervious to the effects of fire, or cause solid objects actually to dematerialise or disappear, and *vice versa*.

Conclusion

The supernormal phenomena of Spiritualism when properly studied, prove that we survive the loss of the body at death, and that our personality and habits of thought are unaltered by the change of circumstance. They also prove that communication is possible between those who have passed over and those still in earth life. Our spirit friends tell us that they are still very much alive; that their condition is not a shadowy, ghost-like one, but, on the contrary, that they have a perfectly tangible body, that their perceptions are keener and that everything they were familiar with in earth life has a counterpart in the spirit world, even more tangible and real. They also unite in asserting that their new world is more beautiful, that their condition is one of greater happiness and that, if given the choice, nothing would induce them to return to earth life. This condition of greater happiness, however, is not immediately attainable by all. Those who in earth life have been cruel, selfish and uncharitable are far from happy, for, not only are their misdeeds and moral character apparent to all, but they are segregated from happier spirits, and can only improve their condition by a

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change of heart and mind, a spiritual development which may occupy a long period of time. To all right-minded people, whatever their religious views, a full realisation of these important truths brings with it a feeling of assurance and happiness which faith and hope alone can never give.

Appendix

The following rules for forming spirit circles are given for the assistance of those who desire to enter into the investigation in their own home. They were compiled by J. J. Morse, late editor of *The Two Worlds*, and embody the results of his experiences extending over nearly forty years.

It is quite an erroneous idea that the phenomena of Spiritualism can only be obtained in the presence of professional mediums. The most wonderful results have been obtained, in thousands of instances, by private families unaided by any previously developed media, private or professional.

How to Form Spirit Circles

The spirit circle is a gathering of persons who desire to establish relations with the world of spirits, and receive communications therefrom. As such communication is a matter of fact—proved by oft-repeated experiment—it follows that the observance of those conditions which experience suggests will be the surest way of obtaining the desired results.

Among the conditions required to be observed, the following should receive careful consideration :—

The Place

This should be a comfortably warmed and cheerfully-lighted apartment, which, during the progress of the sitting, should be kept free from all intrusions. Circles for enquiry should always be held in the light.

The Sitters

Those only should be requested to join in the experiment who are willing to devote time and patience to a methodical pursuit of the enquiry. Circles entirely composed of either sex are not so suitable as those in which the sexes are in proportion. In experimental circles from five to seven sitters are sufficient.

The Arrangement of Sitters

The sitters should be so arranged that a lady alternates with a gentleman at the table used. There is no need to restrict the sitters to any particular form of table. When the communication is established, changes in the seating of the sitters may be desired by the communicating intelligence. Such change should invariably be made and adhered to at subsequent meetings, unless and until otherwise directed.

The Phenomena

Do not look for "marvellous phenomena" at first. The simplest phenomenon that demonstrates the existence of an agency external to the sitters is of more importance to the enquirer than the more extraordinary phenomena, which are at first accepted with reserve. The initial phenomena will most likely take the form of tilts, or movements of the table. Such "tilts" or "movements" can be made to serve as a method of communicating with the unseen operators by using the following code of signals, i.e., one "tilt" or "movement" being understood as "No," two as "Doubtful," three as "Yes," in response to the questions, which should be addressed to the agent at work as soon as the movements are obtained. Should "raps" be heard, the above code of signals can still be observed. Should any sitter exhibit a desire to write—as indicated by the movements of the hand and arm—supply the person so influenced with a sheet of paper and pencil, and await results. Should any sitter become entranced, do not get alarmed, nor hastily break up the sitting, as such cases are rarely dangerous.

Forms of Communication

Spirits adopt various forms of communicating with mankind. Trances, visions, impressions, personations and writing are among the

more general forms resorted to. In most of these cases the medium is put under a psychological or mesmeric "control" by the spirit operating, and during the continuance of the state may deliver addresses, describe spirits present, and also scenes in the spirit land; personate the character of departed friends, and repeat characteristic actions and personal incidents—names, dates, etc.—connected therewith; and either by aid of the Planchette, Ouija, or similar agent, or by a pencil held in the hand in the ordinary manner, write out messages from the intelligences communicating. Generally, the fact of communication is most easily established by the process known as "table movements," as above referred to. Seat the company at the table, and follow the code of signaling previously mentioned when motions or sounds are obtained. There are many other forms of communication, but these now stated will suffice for all practical purposes to help the enquirer in the early stages of investigation.

The Duration of Circles

Let the circle be continued for not less than one hour, even if no results are obtained. Twice in one week is frequently enough to form a circle. Let it be remembered that all circles are experimental; hence no one should be discouraged if phenomena are not obtained at the

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first few sittings. Stay with the same circle for eight sittings at least, and if no results are then obtained (providing the above conditions are observed), you may conclude that the requisite psychic elements are not presented by the sitters. In that case the members of the circle should try the plan of introducing fresh visitors of a suitable character. A single change is frequently sufficient.

General Suggestions

Endeavour to retain the same sitters at each sitting.

Music, vocal or instrumental, is advised to open each meeting. It is not an absolute necessity.

Avoid excitement or fatigue for some hours before attending the circle. Never indulge in stimulants previous to a sitting. The forces used are drawn from the physical and psychical parts of our nature, and are therefore affected by the bodily and spiritual states of all concerned.

Do not sit with, or admit to your circle, anyone whom you dislike, or in whom you have not perfect confidence. Avoid acrimonious discussion. Honest scepticism is no barrier to the enquiry, but prejudice and suspicion are undesirable anywhere.

The absence of visible results is no proof that no advance has been made. Often most

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is done when the least is evident to any of our senses. Much may have to be done by the spirit operators before the object of the meeting is accomplished. They are the workers; therefore it is not unreasonable to ask that you bring to each meeting of your circle the requisites most desired, patience and perseverance.

If you have any deep-rooted religious objection to the subject, or any bigoted aversion to it, leave it entirely alone. You are unsuited to the enquiry, and will derive no benefit therefrom. While the facts crave no one's favour, they fear no one's opposition, but a scientific enquiry is no place for the ventilation of intolerant opinions or prejudices, religious or scientific.

PHENEAS SPEAKS

RECORDS OF A SPIRIT CIRCLE
REPORTED BY

Sir ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

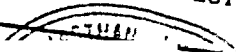
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